

THE QUIVER

Saturday, July 30, 1870.



"He suddenly proposed by letter."—p. 677.

TWO YEARS.

A TALE OF TO-DAY. BY THE AUTHOR OF "ESTHER WEST," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THOUGHTS OF HOME.

"I'm not fit for this sort of work, that's true enough," said Harry to himself, as he contemplated his blistered feet, more at his ease. The toilsome day was over; the cool of the evening had set

in, and still he lingered out of doors, glad to remain away from the atmosphere of oaths and tobacco, of noise and nastiness, which filled his cheap lodging-house. "But then, what am I fit for?" was his

next thought; "or what does it matter, when a fellow isn't good for much, if he does go to the grave a little before his time?"

"But it does matter," his heart whispered in protest—a protest which every heart uncorrupted by vice will make; "and you ought to be fit for a great deal, at least, God intended that you should."

It was the hour when "the glory of the sum of things" most penetrates the soul—the hour of twilight. He fell to thinking about home, and what they were doing there. Had they forgotten him, one and all? He could hardly think it. But they had given him up. He had felt it so hard and cruel, that he could scarcely bear to think of it, that Nelly especially should have let him go so lightly. Doubtless it was at his father's desire. Doubtless, also, it was for her own advantage; but that only made it seem harder still. He would not have yielded her up for an old man's favour, or his wealth. "Shallow-hearted, easily won and easily lost," he had been tempted to call her. But to-night, now that he had rested, and bathed away the smart of his blisters and eaten his meal of bread, he felt in a softer mood. He himself had been to blame perhaps. He had held life and love too lightly, too carelessly. He had been too comfortable, and he thought with a grim smile of such a simple thing as throwing aside a clean shirt because he had crumpled the linen—now he had known what it was to go without the cleansing altogether.

He sat with his feet dangling over the quay, his hand shading his eyes. Far away over the shining waters was home—his home no longer. Would it ever be his again? Should he ever return thither? He might return now, as the prodigal son returned, but would the fatted calf be killed for him? He knew it would not. He understood his father better than his father understood him. At that moment he felt sincerely reverent towards the old man, with his few great virtues and his few stern faults. "He is upright, firm, and self-denying, while I have been self-indulgent, and weak, and wavering; but if I went back to him now, he could not understand me; he would despise me. He would not love me any better for hankering after the good things of home, and he would see no other motive in my return. Under the same circumstances he would never return, unless prosperous and in triumph. And how shall I return in triumph? The road to riches is long and hard, and mine are not the feet to tread it, as witness these blisters. No; it is all over with me. I shall knock about the world for a few years more or less, and then drop off somehow, and nobody will care very much. Oh, Nelly—Nelly!" he cried—not aloud, indeed, but with the inward cry he stretched his arms towards the darkening east, "oh, Nelly—Nelly! shall I never see you again; never see the face that seemed to watch me through all my fever-dreams and heal me with its loveliness;

never make you love me just as I am, with all my faults?"

A man may be better than his faults—better than his virtues even; and Harry Palmer felt this dimly when he cried out for such a love as he himself would give. Down, too, in the depths of consciousness there rose up a feeling of thankfulness that there was One who knew every tender and generous impulse, and to whom return was never unwelcome and never in vain; of thankfulness, too—which had in it nothing of the Pharisee—that he had never defiled himself, in soul and body, with the vice which he saw around him: the more he saw of that, he loathed it the more.

Sitting there, he was joined by his friendly fellow-labourer, the well-tanned native, who had pronounced his unfitness for unloading salt, at least, and who had helped him, when the day's work was done, to a bath of fresh water to soothe his smarting skin.

"Guess you're thinking of home, now," said the leathery little man, sitting down beside him, and taking a clasp knife out of his pocket.

Harry nodded acquiescence.

His companion cut a bit of tobacco and put it in his cheek, and then began to whittle away at a stick, which he had apparently picked up for the purpose. What with whistling now and then, and spitting and whittling all the time, he had not very much to say; and what he did say was chiefly in the form of sharp interrogation.

"What sort of home was it?" he asked directly.

Harry smiled. "A very good sort, I believe," he answered; "wealthy, without luxury or ostentation."

"Reckon you'd be glad to get back then?"

No answer.

"Why don't you go?" was the next question.

It was a rather difficult one to answer, on the whole; but Harry desired to answer it. What was this man to him that he should care to conceal from him his history or his experience? It is a common feeling that prompts many to reveal themselves more fully to an entire stranger than to an acquaintance or a friend. The utterance of a stranger has in it something of the oracular; being unbiassed and disinterested, his judgment is felt to be the voice of the universal. Feeling thus, Harry answered—

"But I do not know that I am wanted."

His listener indulged in a more prolonged whistle and a more vigorous exhortation. "Got into disgrace, I reckon."

"That's about it," said Harry.

"Mother alive?"

"Dead."

"Thought so. Stepmother, I reckon."

"No," replied Harry, smiling at the mistake. "No stepmother; two sisters and a wife."

"Wife!" ejaculated his companion in unfeigned astonishment.

"Yes; she's with my father. I offended him, and she has gone over to his side."

"I'd go back," was the sentence of his companion. "You can't have done much harm, or she'd have stuck to you. She wants to punish you by feigning faithlessness."

The tone of the oracle was rather light; but oracles have always been given to jesting. Harry Palmer was in a serious mood, however. "I think not," was his answer; "besides, I'm no worse than I was."

"You're worse off, aint you? that'll do."

"You would not go back to be fed for pity, like a starved dog?"

"Well, no; I'd like to earn my salt."

"You would not go back, to have them think that you wanted a share of the good things at home?"

"Not I."

"Then why should I do it?"

The oracle was dumb.

"And suppose you cared for them, and not for the good things; if you went back, or suffered yourself to be driven back, hungry, and naked, and in need; would they believe that you came for love of them, and not from the desire to be fed and clothed?"

"Not likely."

"How would you prove to them that it was so?"

"By stayin' away, I reckon, till I had a good coat on my back and plenty of money in my pockets."

The oracle had made answer just as an oracle should; Harry was exactly of the same mind. And yet—and yet the generous heart could have found ten times higher and more generous arguments on the other side. He asked his companion if he had ever read the parable of the Prodigal Son. He had heard of it, he said, but long ago.

Would he care to hear it now?

He had no objection.

There was still light enough, and Harry took out Nelly's Church Service, which he always carried about with him. It was wrapped in paper, lest it should be soiled in the course of his work. He undid the clasp for the first time, while his companion eyed him with a curious mixture of wonder and contempt. In turning to the lesson for the day which contains the parable, one of Nelly's notes fell fluttering out; the light breeze caught it and whirled it away. It floated on the water at their feet. The quick eye of the American was on it; in a moment he was over the edge of the quay. Harry thought he had suddenly gone mad, and was attempting suicide. He started up and looked round for help, for he could not swim. Then he saw what he had not before noticed—a small boat dancing on the water, and fastened by a rope to an iron ring in the stone. The American hardly seemed to go below the surface, so light he seemed in the water. A stroke or two, and he had caught the rope, and was hauling himself up by it. Not many minutes had elapsed before he was

standing dripping by Harry's side, with a bit of paper held gingerly between his teeth.

"What did you do that for?" exclaimed Harry.

The American took the paper out of his mouth and handed it to him. "Open that out, and let's see."

Harry did so. It was a Bank of England note for twenty pounds. He saw at once how it had come there.

"I knew by the look of it," said the American. "I knew it was a Bank of England, so it couldn't be less than a five."

"And you thought that was worth the chance of being drowned," said Harry.

"Drowned!" exclaimed the New Yorker: "a cork would sink sooner than I. But if you don't care for the bit of paper you can just hand it over. Have you got any more?" he asked with a grin.

Harry turned the leaves and found the fellow of it. The leathery cheeks of the American wrinkled with laughter, indeed, he wrinkled all over. He looked at Harry from head to foot, saying, "Well, you're the most curus specimen I iver did set eyes on, to have all that money and go on as you've been doin'."

"But I didn't know I had it."

"That's more curus still."

"There, you may take one for your pains," said Harry; "I should never have picked it up myself."

"That's most curusest of all," cried the American, suddenly serious though, as he clutched the note.

"Now, what do you think I'll do with this?"

"I don't know," replied Harry.

"Make a fortin," said his companion, with an air of perfect assurance. "And what will you do with yours?" he asked.

"I'd like very much to do the same," said Harry, smiling.

"Well, you shall. I'll give you value for your money," said the Yankee. "If you'll come along with me;" and in his own mind he thought the money would be hardly earned, for anything so soft as this young man was, from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head, he had never yet come across in all his varied experience.

"And where are you going, if I am to come along with you?" asked Harry.

"West," replied his companion, "West."

"And what will you do?"

"Travel."

He then proceeded, in a rapid way, to sketch his plan of operation. It was simply to supply settlers in the West with such indispensable articles as they were likely to want, taking with him as large and varied an assortment as possible, and, making a depôt of the nearest railway station, carry these to their doors, taking in exchange, not money, but goods, which he must transport as best he could, and so establish a regular trade in produce, which in time might assume, as Harry could see, almost gigantic

proportions. Harry proposed a partnership; but his companion was too "cute" for that: they were to work together, but to remain free to part at any moment. Darkness came down upon them in the discussion, and they went their ways, to meet again early on the morrow. There was no time to be lost.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A SEARCH.

As the last light was departing, the smoke of a large steamer appeared to streak the horizon. The two men sitting on the edge of the quay saw the trail of smoke, and watched it melt into the deepening gloom without speculation. Elsewhere, men on the lookout put up their glasses with satisfaction. The English steam-packet expected that evening had arrived. The usual preparations were being made for its reception, but seeing that it would be rather late before the vessel could discharge her passengers, many, for the sake of their luggage, would pass the night on board. On the deck, among others watching for the first glimpse of the land—that land which has long been the hope of eager hearts—stood Douglas Dalrymple, forgetting for a moment his mission in the thrill which ran through his veins at sight of its shores.

He was not one of those who would remain on board. Travelling-bag in hand, leaving what other luggage he had to take care of itself till the morrow, he hastened on shore. He could have fallen down and kissed it, like its first discoverer, if for nothing else than that it was the land of the great, wise, simple man, who had sealed his testimony with his blood, Abraham Lincoln, who to his thinking was more like that name—father of his who was called "the friend of God," than any other man that ever lived.

Harry Palmer was sleeping soundly in his miserable quarters, where he had chosen an attic with a window opening to the sky, long before Douglas Dalrymple, in his luxurious hotel, could get rid of the train of thoughts and feelings awakened by his enthusiasm.

Ere retiring to rest, Mr. Dalrymple looked over the contents of his bag. There were three photographs of Harry Palmer, and three of Nelly, and one or two letters. These he took out and laid on his dressing-table to be ready at hand in the morning. In the morning he was to commence his search for Harry, and he had already chalked out his plan, or rather plans, for he was fertile in invention, and had elaborated several on shipboard. One was, to make interest with the principal photographers, and get them to display the photographs (he would increase the number by getting the originals copied) in their windows. Another was to advertise in the New York papers, and that in a more telling manner than could be practised in England.

But in the morning, long before Mr. Dalrymple was awake, Harry Palmer had been up and doing. He had met his friend, Mr. Jacob Inston, and, before Broad Street was so much as astir, they had purchased their various articles. By noon they and their packages were ready for the journey westward.

Loungers in the streets, who happened, any time after midday, to glance at a photographer's window, were arrested by a pair of photographs placed side by side in a conspicuous position. They represented a handsome, though slightly heavy, young man, and a very lovely girl, all unknown to the pacers of those gay New York thoroughfares. They were the photographs brought over by Douglas Dalrymple; and what arrested the attention of the passers-by, and even caused a little crowd to gather round the window, was that underneath the gentleman's photograph was written legibly: "H. P., inquire within."

And while the train which carried Harry and his friend was speeding far and fast from New York city, the idlers of the day there were canvassing the claims of the new beauty, and pledging themselves to find her out, and wondering what were her relations with the handsome young man who appeared by her side.

The pair of photographs made quite a sensation, and the photographers who had been obliging enough to exhibit them were entreated for copies, but in vain. Mr. Dalrymple would not allow Nelly's picture to be sold, and he did not deem it necessary to success, of which he was sanguine.

But as time went on, he grew less and less sanguine. He advertised; he frequented public places; he multiplied the photographs till all New York knew them. But there is no need to enter into the particulars of a search which we know beforehand was to prove vain. In his letters to Anne Palmer, Mr. Dalrymple still held out hope, which was life, to Nelly; but he knew that his personal efforts were futile. He could not search every city on the great continent, so he determined to keep up the agencies he had opened and to return.

First, however, he resolved to visit Washington and Boston, and to see the Falls of Niagara.

He left New York therefore, having engaged a subordinate in one of the newspaper offices to receive any communications that might be necessary from himself, and to let him know if any inquiries were made. He also kept his friends in England aware of his movements, and his movements had become very rapid and not a little uncertain.

He was, indeed, strangely hurried and distracted, and every letter from England seemed to make him more so. Among his correspondents was Miss Macnaughten as well as Anne Palmer, and he took to comparing their letters with regard to matters in which they seemed mutually interested.

In his absence a renewal of intimacy had evidently

taken place between the Macnaughtens and Nelly; but it was Anne who seemed the favourite now. He could not understand it, till at length a letter reached him announcing Grace's approaching marriage with a highly eligible party, and making all the circumstances clear to him.

Then he left his tour uncompleted, and resolved to return at once to England, and to re-visit the great continent at some future time.

He came back hurriedly—unexpectedly, bringing with him very little save an immense portfolio of photographs, good, bad, and indifferent, which he had purchased from the artists who had promised still to retain the likenesses of Harry and his wife among those exposed as specimens of their skill.

CHAPTER XL.

THE WIDOWER.

MR. MACNAUGHTEN had returned to England very rich indeed, but slightly touched with liver complaint. He was still a tolerably handsome man, in spite of a considerable increase of girth. His dark eyes could still flash and glow, and his swart face was yet unwrinkled. He had come home to enjoy himself, and he was determined to do so, but with as little exertion to himself as possible. Early in the summer he had taken his sister and daughters to Malvern for the pure air of the hills. After a short stay, he carried them off to Cheltenham, Bath, and a few more places, to which retiring men of his class resort, in order that he might see if any of these seemed more desirable than London as a place of residence. The young ladies were in terror lest he should make choice of a provincial town, and they naturally did their best to depreciate those they visited. Not that their wishes would have weighed much with their father; for he was one of those Englishmen—not a few—who, having what is called a will of their own, forget that other people have the same. He was fond of his daughters—had passionately loved their mother—and could deny them nothing at a distance: that is, he gratified their every wish in his lavish gifts to them; but they found it a different matter to live with him. They had been brought up under their aunt's firm but reasonable rule, and did not like their father's extremely arbitrary one. He had lived not among equals, but among servants, and, to say truth, was terribly exacting. He expected a sort of mental prostration to his will, which the ladies of his household were by no means inclined to practise. Miss Macnaughten had, indeed, flatly refused to keep house for her brother; she desired to maintain her independence, she said.

London, however, was preferred by Mr. Macnaughten, so there was one cause of uneasiness removed from the minds of the ladies. They began to think joint housekeeping might even be a very pleasant affair, and returning to London just

before Mr. Dalrymple started for New York, they began the preliminary task of house-hunting. It did not prove a very difficult one, for they confined themselves to the Hyde Park district, and were not limited as to expenditure, so they selected a house in the stately precincts of Gloucester Square, and began forthwith to furnish it. This they had hardly commenced when Grace's engagement took place. Whether her lover, who had met her at the house of Mr. Dalrymple's sister, had taken the alarm lest she should be spirited away from him, as she was going about so much, or whether he found his position improved, we know not, but he suddenly proposed by letter. He was a young but rising physician—the favourite in one or two brilliant sets; he was well connected, and even tolerably independent—that is to say, he could have lived without practice in a style rather more modest than he had adopted. Grace liked him, and she accepted him without more ado.

It made a great difference this to all, but especially to Jane. She was to have all the labour and anxiety of a household upon her single head, and somehow she found out suddenly that it involved a great deal of both. She alone was to be with her father, and supply him with amusement and even with food—no easy matter, this last; while as regards the former his exactions were almost equal to the world-famous projector of the "Arabian Nights." Jane lost her interest in amber, damask, and white lace hangings; in tapestry and Turkey carpets, in buhl and ormolu. In short, she lost her spirits, and the furnishing began to hang fire. Once or twice Mr. Macnaughten had found cause to complain that his desires in some particular had not been attended to by his eldest daughter. As for Grace, she was already free. No one thought of exacting anything from her, or expecting anything. She was engaged.

And her engagement had done Grace good, as it does most well-disposed girls. She threw off something of her girlish reserve, and gained in frankness and in tenderness at once. Her affectionate nature having found a stay, luxuriated and put forth blossoms of social kindness and brightness. Her acquaintances remarked how she had "come out," and that they had never known she was "so nice."

One day the sisters, in pursuit of their multifarious purchases, had visited a fashionable shop. A carriage stood waiting for them, its horses slightly impatient, its occupant considerably so. Twice the carriage had driven round Trafalgar Square, and twice returned. Mr. Macnaughten was fidgeting in his seat. There they were at last, but who had they got with them, and when did they intend to part from their friends? Last words, and more last words, were being exchanged on the broad, and at that time unoccupied pavement.

But instead of becoming more restive under this

new delay, Mr. Macnaughten had taken to close observation of his daughter's friends. They were evidently sisters, and dressed in mourning. One especially impressed Mr. Macnaughten by her stately and graceful figure, and her grave, pale face—perfect as a Greek sculpture. "Who are they? Who is she?" he was longing to ask.

They were Mrs. Eden and Anne Palmer, and they had met Jane and Grace while engaged in a similar manner, namely, in selecting dresses in one of the mirrored saloons. With far more than her wonted lordliness Grace, who was the first to notice them, came forward with her greeting. Grace seemed to take the lead now in everything. Then there were inquiries to make on both sides, and invitations to be exchanged, pressing on the side of the Macnaughtens, and all this only in the intervals of the more important business which had brought them there.

What detained them on the pavement after they had left the shop, was Jane's saying carelessly, "Our friend Mr. Dalrymple is in America."

"Yes," from Anne.

"You knew he was then?" Jane said. She had reason to believe that Mr. Dalrymple had seen more of the family than he cared to acknowledge.

"Yes," said Anne, quietly—she was getting quite brave—"we heard from him only yesterday."

"Indeed! We had no letter," said Grace.

"He is making inquiries for us about my brother."

"Inquiries," said Jane; "he is not lost, is he?" She spoke laughingly, not knowing that anything serious had happened.

"He has not been heard of for some time," said Anne, while her sister stood silent by her side.

"Not been heard of!" echoed Grace.

"Nelly must be so unhappy; I must come and see her."

"And I, too," said Grace. "Tell her we are coming."

"I will do so," replied Anne, adding, "we shall be glad to see you, though it is too great a journey to ask you to undertake."

Then they said good-bye and parted.

"Did you ever see such heavy creatures?" Jane exclaimed.

"They do not chatter," said Grace; "but you must remember they are grave with good cause. You know Mr. Dalrymple thinks them interesting."

This was said on the very steps of the carriage, from which their father had just stepped to hand them in, so Jane did not reply.

"Who are these ladies?" inquired Mr. Macnaughten. He smiled the inevitable smile when told that they were the daughters of a button-manufacturer.

"I should have guessed that they were honourables, at least," he said. "But how in the world did you come to know them?"

It was explained.

"What a strange freak," he said, alluding to Mr. Palmer's treatment of Nelly. "And the young man?"

"Has run away," said Jane, who liked to be smart.

Her father laughed.

"Worse than that. The husband of one of these ladies is in prison."

"Dear me, how dreadful! Is that the kind of company you keep?" and laughingly Mr. Macnaughten seemed to dismiss the subject. He had not even asked which of them was the married one.

(To be continued.)

WORDS IN SEASON.

LAMPS GOING OUT.—I.

BY THE REV. CANON BATEMAN, M.A., VICAR OF MARGATE.

THE ideas expressed by the above words are, of course, figurative; but they are familiar to us from our Lord's beautiful parable of the Ten Virgins. They suggest four topics of great importance to Christian men, who would make their varied reading conducive to edification. They teach something about a profession of religion; something about slumbering and sleeping; something about dim lamps; and something about shut doors. The parable will suggest the thoughts.

1. THE PROFESSION OF RELIGION is the first thing

which demands notice. The "sword of the Spirit" is often turned aside by men thinking or saying that the calls to repentance and faith, the conversion of the heart to God, the coming "out of darkness into marvellous light," do not appertain to them as professing Christians. They have been baptised; they adhere to the creeds of the Church; they stand to the catechism; they attend upon the ministry; they reverence God's name, God's book, God's day, God's house; they "hear the word gladly;" they do "many things;" they are not accused of being riotous or unruly; they fulfil what they consider their duty as husbands, wives, parents, friends, and neighbours. What

lack they yet? Why should appeals be made to them? Why should the "sword of the Spirit" be directed against them, and the thoughts and intents of their hearts be revealed?

The parable of our Lord explains the reason and answers the remonstrance. It supposes a profession of religion. All the ten virgins had a *name*, a *call*, a *lamp*, and *oil*. All were alike professors; all were in the service of the Lord; all were waiting upon him; all were looking for his appearing; and yet five of them were wise and five of them were foolish; five of them began well, and ended badly; five of them were left without oil at last; five of them found the door shut!

There is no doubt that our Lord spake many parables, and that his apostles wrote many words, which in their primary sense were applicable to the heathen world around, foreshadowing the reception the Gospel should receive, the many hindrances it should meet, and the different effects it should produce; but the three impressive parables in Matt. xxv. have no such limitation. They are addressed to the professing Church; and from the net they spread, no fish can escape. Of the ten virgins, five were wise, five foolish. Of professing Christians, five are real, five nominal; five true, five false; five safe, five unsafe; five alive to God, five dead whilst living.

Serious and undoubted truths like these should come home to all. The habit of saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace" is anticipated by our Lord, and his words expose the danger. He speaks to his professed followers—to those who bear his name, frequent his church, read his Bible, kneel at his table, and wait for his appearing. He teaches them that profession alone is not enough in itself; and that if some to whom it appertains are wise, some also are foolish.

Is it not foolish, for instance, to *take things for granted*? How foolish to take it for granted that the promises of God belong to us, that our names are written in the Book of Life, that for us "to live is Christ, and to die gain," without examining whether our character is Christ-like, our penitence sincere, our faith genuine, our hope well grounded! Many do this. They have never sat at Christ's feet, never listened to his words, never risen at his call, never stood at his cross, never suffered for his sake, never borne his reproach; and yet they deem themselves disciples!

If the little company of twelve, grouped around their Lord, were still going up and down amongst us, bearing witness to the truth, condemning the world, enduring shame and reproach, and not having where to lay their heads—would the "many" before spoken of, and who take things for granted, be amongst them? Let conscience answer!

Is it not foolish also to *put things off*? Many do

this. They are too young or too busy for serious thought. They have the piece of ground to see, the oxen to prove, the wife to marry. Religion and the care of the soul are put off to a more convenient season. Resting content with what has been done for them outwardly—with their baptism, their training, and their teaching; they give no heed to what is going on inwardly—the growth of weeds, the rusting of hinges, the formation of bad habits, the spinning of the world's webs, the entwining of the sceptic's doubts. And yet they know not at what hour their Lord may come—what sudden accident may hurry them to his presence—what insidious disease may be sapping the springs of life—how short their probation may be—how quickly the things of time and sense may escape their grasp, and vanish from their sight. Is it not foolish thus to put things off? Let conscience answer!

Is it not foolish, moreover, to *leave things in uncertainty*? Many do this. If asked to give a reason for the hope that is in them; to explain how a sinner may obtain salvation; to give Christ the honour due unto his name; to define the words justification, sanctification, adoption, grace, peace, all is at once confusion and uncertainty, and they are content to leave it thus. It may not be essential to salvation that we should feel safe, but it is essential that we should be safe—safe on the Rock. Our views of religion must be clear. We must be able to give to every one that asketh a reason for the hope that is in us. We must "know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings." We must have "committed unto him the keeping of our souls in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." We must be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Whilst thus engaged, the feeling of safety often comes and abides, as a lightener of our labour and a comforter of our hearts. But it follows—it does not precede. It rarely enters a craving heart; but the rather cheers a holy, active life.

To leave it all uncertain whether Christ loves us and we love him; whether when he comes he will own or disown us; whether the men with the "slaughter weapons" in their hands will discern upon us the mark of those who "sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done" (Ezek. ix. 4), and pass us by or smite—is it not foolish to leave all this uncertain, and to care for none of these things? Let conscience answer.

Be it borne in mind that these inquiries are made and these remarks suggested, not as concerning heathen lands or missionary work. The ranks of Christ's soldiers are being inspected—a scrutiny of individuals who bear Christ's name and owe him allegiance is taking place: the ceiled house, the pleasant pictures, the sumptuous fare,

are being considered, as well as the bare walls, few comforts, and scanty fare of the humble cottage: a separation is being made in Christian congregations: a distinction is asserted amongst kneeling communicants.

All this comes close home to every one who professes and calls himself a Christian; and if among such there be indeed the foolish as well as the wise; if what has been written above in any way describes our cast of character, then attention should be arrested, and interest riveted upon what follows.

2. Something has now to be said about SLUMBERING AND SLEEPING, which indicates what, more or less, all feel. In various degrees the weariness of the flesh and the deadening influence of the world come over all.

When God's overruling providence first works without, and God's good Spirit first moves within, so that our eyes are opened and we see what we ought to do, and seek "grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same," it is then a time of gratitude, and light, and joy—a time of activity and vigour, and new life. It is spring-time to the soul. The buds and blossoms all come out. Communion with Christ is sweet. Prayer is fervent. Self-denial is easy. Obedience is gladly rendered. "Lord what wilt thou have me to do" is ever on the lips. We are "Israelites indeed," just escaped from Egypt, just freed from bonds, walking in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, bound for the promised land, and singing "songs of deliverance" by the way.

But soon there comes a change over our spirits. Between Egypt and Canaan lies the wilderness. First love grows cold. The feet grow weary. The fleshpots of Egypt come back to mind. The song ceases. Darkness settles on the soul. A period of slumbering and sleeping begins. It begins with almost all. The word concerning them is general—"they all slumbered and slept."

Exceptions there may be: for grace maketh men to differ: and the path of some is like "the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But as a general rule, admitting of exceptions, the description is applicable to all the people of God. Religious duties are still performed, but with less life and power. Some strength of purpose and principle remains, but it is "a little strength." The name of Christ is only "not denied." The light shines dimly.

Whilst mourning over this, we, as members of Christ's professing Church, must recognise it as, more or less, and at sundry times and in divers manners, descriptive of our state.

But there are worse things than slumbering and sleeping. Let attention be arrested and fixed on these. There is such a thing as backsliding from

God. There is such a thing as returning to the world whence we have come out. There is such a thing as building again what has been destroyed.

Short phrases are descriptive of this dangerous state.

1. *So dull*, people say; and when they say it, they are speaking of the religion which was once the joy and rejoicing of their hearts. When a man had found the "treasure hid in the field," for "joy thereof," we read, "he went and sold all that he had, and bought that field." Ah! yes, that is descriptive of a soul where dormant grace has sprung to life—of a soul which has found Christ. For joy thereof he would have done, denied, endured anything. But now, "So dull," he says. "All is so dull that I must needs go to the world for amusement, I must needs mingle with the world's votaries, dance to the world's music, see the world's sights, and play at the world's games." Yes! there are worse things than slumbering and sleeping.

2. *No harm* is another phrase very significant of a like change for the worse. "No harm in these things," is often said.

How know you, O reader, that there is no harm. Hast thou eaten of the tree of which the Lord God said unto thee, Thou shalt not eat of it? The tasting of the fruit precedes the opening of the eyes. It was so in the garden of Eden; the knowledge of evil followed the commission of it; and men now argue for the world's pleasures after they have tampered with them. "No harm in cards," says the card-player. "No harm in the theatre," says the play-goer. "No harm on the race-course," says the gambler. "No harm in the ball-room," says the dancer. When professing Christian men begin to say, "No harm," they have in some way got harm. The bloom is rubbed off the fruit; the poison has begun to circulate; the eyes are dimmed, the conscience deadened, the voice changed.

Unnecessary scrupulosity is not hereby commended; and none of the social and pleasant and harmless amenities of life are condemned. But the young fresh love of a converted soul, which finds in Christ that which it craved and longed for; which was weary and heavy laden, and there found rest; which threw off the world's gilded chains and shackles, and put on Christ's righteousness, and began to work in his vineyard—that first, fresh, constraining, satisfying love is not scrupulosity. It is genuine and true. True love, genuine love, always breaks off from old things, and attaches itself to new. And if any man looks back and begins to plead for and excuse the world's pursuits and chosen habits, and to say of them, "No harm," he has surely left his first love, and proved that there is something worse than slumbering and sleeping.

3. The same is proved when we say, "*No dif*



"In the face of the wind I fought my way."—p. 682.

ference." No difference between what one does, and what another does.

The character of a Christian man is not known only by what he does. The outward actions tell a good deal, but not all. They may be right in themselves, but done from wrong motives. The heart may not be right with God, even whilst the rules of morality are kept. Hence religion, when wrought of God, begins with the heart. Grace sets the heart right, and then the life comes right. To say that there is no difference amongst men is to dishonour God; for it is he that maketh them to differ. There was no apparent difference between the ten virgins, for all were slumbering and sleeping; but there was a difference vital and eternal—five were wise, five foolish; five were admitted to the marriage, five were shut out. God sees the difference, though man does not.

The Lord knoweth them that are his. They may be compassed with infirmities. There may be (as in the case of their Lord) no beauty that you should desire in them; yet their hearts are given up to God; they are savingly united to Christ; they see the beauty of holiness; they have meat to eat the world knoweth not of; they have treasure laid up in heaven; they do those good works which God hath prepared for them to walk in; they are amongst the called, the chosen, and the faithful; with the title they have a meetness for the inheritance above. If no difference can be discerned between them and others—between these men of God and men of the world, then this want of discernment shows that a worse thing has happened than slumbering and sleeping, and that a certain danger is impending and imminent.

IN THE FACE OF THE WIND.

IN the face of the wind I fought my way,
In the front of the rain I prest;
And my voice rang out with a grateful shout,
For my heart was strong in my breast.

Then the wind sank down and the rainbow shone,
All Nature crooned with calm;

And sadly still, like a moveless mill,
My heart forgot her psalm.

O come, sweet winds, though with storm and rain—
The music of life are ye!

And the rest of toil and the peace of pain
Are sweeter than all to me.

B.

THE HYMNS OF ENGLAND.—VII.

QUAINT AND FANTASTIC HYMNS (concluded).

FRANCIS QUARLES, the Prince of Emblematists, was born in 1592, a year before George Herbert. He studied at Cambridge, where he took his B.A. The strange fancies, which subsequently took the form of verse, seem to have formed part of his life. It was a strange fancy to become a lawyer, "not for the sake of gaining aught, nor seeking a reward," but simply for the sake of advising his friends when in perplexity about legal matters, and keeping them out of their difficulties. A laudable undertaking, but it did not serve his purpose well, and we find him at one time occupying the post of cup-bearer to the Queen of Bohemia, in which office he was brought into contact with the vanities and frivolities which he afterwards so sternly condemned; at another time we see him acting as private secretary to Archbishop Usher, and at another, "chronologer to the City of London." He was a staunch Royalist, for which he both received gain and suffered loss. His gains consisted in the bestowal by Charles I. of a pension; but he suffered loss in allowing his zeal to get the better of his prudence. His attachment to the King led him to

write a poem, entitled "The Royal Convict," and to visit the unfortunate monarch at Oxford. For this his property was seized, and his books and MSS. destroyed. Later on, a false accusation of a political nature was brought against him, and as it was an attack also upon his religious principles, he took it so much to heart that he said it would be his death. No doubt this was the fact, and the good, quaint, loving man went to his grave at the early age of fifty-two. He was the father of eighteen children by one wife. His last words were: "O sweet Saviour of the world! let thy last words upon the cross be my last words in the world. Into thy hands I commend my spirit, and what I cannot utter from my mouth accept from my heart and soul."

His great work was the book of "Emblems," which was published in the year 1635. In this, as in his other writings, he was guilty of as many curious conceits and quaint extravagances as any man who ever wrote verse. His tendency, like that of Donne, was to clothe every thought with so much finery as to make it almost grotesque. Truth, as represented by him, always wore a "coat of many colours." And yet throughout his writings there is a vein of real poetry and an earnest tone

of true piety. For the vices and foibles of his age he had no mercy, and he writes as one who, having tested their worthlessness, is entitled to say of them, "Vanity of vanities."

The "Emblems" were disfigured with grotesque prints, which were caricatures of the text, and to these prints much of the notoriety of the book is attributable. But "metaphor and allegory, however beautiful in themselves, will not always admit of a sensible representation:" in proof of which we may refer to one of the prints illustrating the text, "Oh! that mine head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears," in which a human figure is exhibited, water gushing from it through spouts, like the jets of a fountain; or another, "Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" which represents a man inside a large skeleton, a hopeless and melancholy prisoner.

Here is a very fair specimen of Quarles's fanciful style—

"My soul is like a bird, my flesh the cage,
Wherein she wears her weary pilgrimage
Of hours, as few as evil, daily fed
With sacred wine and sacramental bread.
The keys that lock her in, and let her out,
Are birth and death! 'twixt both she hops about
From perch to perch, from sense to reason; then
From higher reason down to sense again;
From sense she climbs to faith, where for a season
She sits and sings; then down again to reason;
From reason back to faith, and straight from thence
She rudely flutters to the perch of sense;
From sense to hope; then hops from hope to doubt;
From doubt to dull despair; there seeks about
For desperate freedom, and at ev'ry grate
She wildly thrusts, and begs the untimely date
Of th' unexpired thralldom, to release
The afflicted captive that can find no peace.

"Great Lord of souls, to whom should prisoners fly
But Thee? Thou hadst a cage as well as I,
And, for my sake, Thy pleasure was to know
The sorrows that it brought, and felt'st them, too.
Oh! let me free, and I will spend those days
Which now I waste in begging, in Thy praise."

Many of Quarles's hymns are of a more devotional character, and show a tenderness which contrasts strangely with the bitterness of others.

The following will illustrate his devotional style. The extracts are taken from a poem on the words in Job xiii. 24: "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?"

"Why dost Thou shade Thy lovely face? Oh, why
Does that eclipsing hand so long deny
The sunshine of Thy soul-enlivening eye?"

"Thou art my life; if Thou but turn away
My life's a thousand deaths; Thou art my way—
Without Thee, Lord, I travel not, but stray.

"And yet Thou turn'st away Thy face, and fly'st me;
And yet I sue for grace, and thou deny'st me!
Speak, art Thou angry, Lord, or only try'st me?"

"If I have lost my path, great Shepherd, say
Shall I still wander in a doubtful way?
Lord, shall a lamb of Israel's sheepfold stray?"

"Disclose Thy sunbeams, close Thy wings and stay.
See, see how I am blind, and dead, and stray,
O Thou that art my life, my light, my way!"

A magnificent hymn of Quarles's, quaint, yet free from the quips and cranks which mar the beauty of so many of his effusions, is entitled "Delight in God only." The last verse runs thus—

"In having all things and not Thee, what have I?
Not having Thee, what have my labours got?
Let me enjoy but Thee, what further crave I?
And having Thee alone, what have I not?
I wish nor sea, nor land, nor would I be
Possessed of heaven, heaven unpossessed of Thee."

A little later on in the history of hymn-writers came a man more brilliant in fancy, and yet every bit as quaint as Quarles, but whose popularity mainly depended upon his prose works, which were as poetical—or perhaps more poetical—than his poems. Jeremy Taylor (born 1613) was the son of a barber; an honourable profession, inasmuch as it gave Tenterden to the woollack, Turner and Arkwright to the art and manufactures of England, and Robert Robinson, the author of the world-known hymn, "Come, Thou fount of every blessing," to the ministry. At the age of thirteen he entered Cains College, where he graduated B.A. at the age of eighteen, and became a Fellow. Two years later he graduated M.A., and was ordained.

His life was not without many stirring incidents in it, and they may be summed up in a few words. He was twice married, was a schoolmaster, was chaplain to Charles I.; became a favourite of Charles II., to whom he dedicated his "Ductor Dubitantium; or, The Rule of Conscience," and from whom he received the bishopric of Down and Connor. He was present in the battle-field of Newbury, and was taken prisoner at the siege of Cardigan Castle, but was soon liberated. He exemplified in his life and death, as he did in his works, the power of holy living and holy dying.

His "Festival Hymns," and other poetical pieces, are full of radiant fancy, quaint conceits, and subtle paradoxes; so also are some of his remarks on hymns, as in his "Great Exemplar," referring to the *Gloria in Excelsis*, he says, "As soon as these blessed choristers had sung their Christmas carol, and taught the Church a hymn to put into her offices for ever on the anniversary of this festivity, the angels returned into heaven."

Hear him sing of heaven as the place

"Where the great King's transparent throne
Is of an entire jasper stone;
Where the eye
O' th' chrysolite,
And a sky
Of diamonds, rubies, and chrysoprase,
And, above all, Thy holy face
Makes an eternal clarity."

One of his best-known hymns is upon "Christ Coming again in Triumph."

"Lord, come away,
Why dost Thou stay?

Thy road is ready; and Thy paths, made straight,
With longing expectation wait
The consecration of Thy beauteous feet;
Ride on triumphantly, behold, we lay
Our lusts and proud wills in Thy way.

"Hosanna! welcome to our hearts; Lord, here
Thou hast a temple, too, and full as dear
As that of Zion, and as full of sin—
Nothing but thieves and robbers dwell therein;
Enter, and chase them forth, and cleanse the floor
Crucify them, that they may never more
Profane that holy place,
Where Thou hast chosen to set Thy face,
And then if our stiff tongues shall be
Mute in the praises of Thy deity,
The stones out of the temple wall
Shall cry aloud and call—
Hosanna! and Thy glorious footsteps greet. Amen."

In a quiet village of Suffolk there lived in the Elizabethan era a good old man, who wrote hymns and sacred poems by the score. Faithful Tate, the father of Nahum Tate, was a simple-minded man, pleased with the popular style in the pulpit current in his day, and ever on the look-out for curious verbiage and out-of-the-way allusions; always ingenious, sometimes poetical, and sometimes homely in the extreme.

Hear how he speaks of conscience.

"O Conscience! Conscience! when I look
Into thy register, thy book,
What corner of my heart—what nook—
Stands clear of sin?

"And though my skin feels soft and sleek,
Scarce can I touch my chin, my cheek,
But I can feel Death's jawbone prick
Even through my skin."

It would have been well if Nahum Tate had possessed a little of the genius of his father, and then he would have spared the Church the infliction of his drowsy, dreary, metrical version of the Psalms, which, if it had not been "authorised," would never have survived him. The brother of Dr. Watts, in a letter, thus criticised Tate and his partner: "Tate and Brady still keep near the same pace. I know not what beast they ride (one that will be content to carry double!) but I am sure it is no Pegasus. There is in them a mighty deficiency of that life and soul which are necessary to arouse our fancies and kindle and fire our passions."

They had a few quaint expressions, but nothing to be compared to the drolleries of Sternhold and Hopkins.

Passing over many minor writers, we will come at once to one whose hymns hold amongst a certain class a great popularity, and are to be found now in some of our collections.

John Berridge (1716), the author of "The Christian World Unmasked," wrote between three and four hundred hymns, which were published under the title of "Sion's Songs." He tells us in

his preface that "he took up the trade of hymn-making" when in illness, because "some jingling employment was required which might amuse and not fatigue him." The whole collection was "often threatened with fire, but they escaped that martyrdom. Fatherly mercy prevented their literary death; for authors can seldom prove cruel to their own offspring, however deformed." Some of the hymns are ludicrous, some are comical, and some are full of true and deep earnestness. Few of them, however, are suitable for use in public worship, although they embrace every experience of the religious life.

The hymns very fairly represent the man who wrote them. In his college days he was the life and soul of the circle amongst whom he moved; and the natural vein of humour he possessed, cultivated by attention to the works of wits, made his company much sought after. For many years he laboured in the ministry with his heart dark, and without realising in his own life the truths he preached to others. The knowledge of this made him depressed and anxious, but he gave himself up to earnest prayer for help and deliverance. The way in which he was delivered from that state of mind, which caused him so much distress, is remarkable, and may account in some degree for the strange wildness of his preaching, and the love of excitement and supernatural "signs," which accompanied his appeals. One day he heard a voice, whether from heaven or earth he could not tell, saying, "Cease from thine own works; only believe." "Just before this occurred, he was in a very unusual calm, but now his soul experienced an immediate tempest. Tears gushed forth like a tempest. He saw the rock on which he had been splitting for near thirty years by endeavouring to blend the Law and the Gospel, and unite Christ's righteousness with his own."

A new life now dawned upon him; new power was given to his preaching; a new doctrine—namely, "that salvation is of God, and man's destruction of himself," formed the basis of his teaching, and a new sphere of labour was opened to him. Renouncing the written sermon, he allowed his brilliant fancy, ready wit, and well-stored mind to have full play in extempore preaching. Nor did he confine himself to Everton as the one place of his ministry, but wherever he found an opportunity, there he preached. Ten or twelve sermons a week did the good man deliver, and for twenty years these extraordinary exertions were continued. The effects of his preaching were oftentimes similar to those that accompany recent religious revivals; and in his diary he frequently refers to the converts being struck down, roaring, groaning aloud, seized with mania from Satan, and other outward and visible signs attending the spiritual change.

His bishop complained against his preaching in other parishes, and obtained a promise to abstain from that breach of order. "The bishop, hearing like complaints, again remonstrated. Berridge said he had strictly kept his promise, but that one of his own outlying parishioners had wished him to preach to the labourers on his farm, and offered a wagon as a pulpit; and that he did not think he was doing wrong to have a wagon drawn up in a field *close beside the boundary hedge of the parish*; for he saw a crowd of people in the next field waiting to hear the word of life, and he could not find it in his heart to bid them go home without it, merely because their parish was not on *his* side of the hedge."

He wrote the following epitaph, which is placed over his tomb, and he was buried at his own request in that part of the churchyard where only those who destroyed themselves or came to an ignominious end were interred. This, says his biographer, was his means for *consecrating* the spot, and many have since been buried beside him:—

"Here lie the earthly remains of John Berridge, late vicar of Everton, and an itinerant servant of Jesus Christ, who loved his Master and his work, and, after running on his errands many years, was called up to wait on him above. Reader, art thou born again? No salvation without a new birth! I was born in sin February, 1716. Remained ignorant of my fallen state till 1730. Lived proudly on faith and works for salvation till 1754. Admitted to Everton Vicarage 1755. Fled to Jesus alone for refuge 1756. Fell asleep in Jesus January 22, 1793."

DISCONTENTED HILDA.

THERE lived, not very long ago, a little girl who was always discontented, naughty, and peevish. She dwelt in the country, in a beautiful house with a very large garden. She had several brothers and sisters to play with, and a good kind papa and mamma, who gave her everything she wanted, and bought her toys and sweetmeats in abundance, yet she was never contented, and was always longing for something she had not.

If her little brother or sister had a toy she was sure to want it, and if it was not given to her at once she would beat the child, or cry and scream and dance and kick till it was given to her; sometimes she would fly into a rage, and hold her breath till she almost grew black in the face, which much frightened her mother and nurse, and all the other children were actually terrified lest she should have a fit and do herself serious harm.

Now this little girl was very vain, and fond of fine

We conclude our article with a few selections from the quaint and fantastic hymns of this strange man.

"I AM THE ROSE OF SHARON."

"Jesus, Thou art the Rose
That blushest on the thorn;
Thy blood the semblance shows
When on Mount Calvary torn.
A rugged tree Thou hadst indeed;
But roses from a thorn proceed.

"This Rose has fragrance sweet,
And cheers a conscience well,
Yet pluck it, as it's meet,
Or nothing wilt thou smell;
Its application does impart
The consolation to thy heart."

"WHOSE IMAGE AND SUPERScription HATH IT?"

"If thou art Jesus' coin,
Cast in the Gospel mould,
And wrought with faith divine,
More precious far than gold,
A superscription thou wilt bring,
And some sweet likeness of the King.

"Such superscription does
To Jesus' coin belong,
And every penny shows
His image faint or strong—
A likeness stamp't in His own mint,
Where Christ is viewed in human print."

"I WILL CLOTHE THEE WITH CHANGE OF RAIMENT."

"Dress uniform the soldiers wear
When duty calls abroad,
Not purchased at their cost or care,
But by the prince bestowed.

"Christ's soldiers, too, if Christ-like bred,
Have regimental dress,
'Tis linen white, and faced with red—
'Tis Christ's own righteousness."

clothes, and quite delighted if she heard any one say, "Oh, there goes a pretty little girl!" or, "Look at that child, is she not pretty?" and she would walk along, as proud of her fine clothes and pretty face as could be; but I am sure if any one who called her pretty had seen her face distorted with passion, they would have thought her quite ugly, as I did when I saw her.

One day she had been grumbling at everything and everybody as she usually did, till no one could bear with her any longer, when at last she ran out into the garden, and throwing herself down under an apple-tree, fell a-thinking in her dissatisfied way. "I wish I were a princess, then I should be able to do as I like; though perhaps it would be better to be a queen, then I could make every one do as I liked. I think it would be better still to be a king, then I could frighten every one into doing and saying all I wanted. Ah, how nice it would be to be a fairy. If I were a princess, queen, or king I might be very

ugly, but fairies are such pretty little creatures, they are never ugly; then they have more power than even a king, so that if I were a fairy I could with one wave of my wand destroy anything or anybody I did not like. Yes, I think I would rather be a fairy."

"You shall be a fairy," said a voice at her side, that made her heart leap to her mouth, it so frightened her; and looking up, she saw a most beautiful little creature sitting on a bough of the tree above her—"you shall be a fairy, and I will make you one."

"Will you?" said the little girl; "that will be nice."

"I am not so sure you will think so, when you are one," said the small creature, flying down from the bough, and standing in front of Hilda.

Hilda was the child's name, and I am sure she ought to have been a good girl with such a pretty name.

"Fairies have their work to do, like other beings, and they are punished if they don't do it."

"Do they have to learn lessons?" asked Hilda, "and do as they are told?"

"Some of them have very difficult lessons to learn, and disobedience is severely punished," replied the fairy, with dignity.

"Oh!" said Hilda, but "I hope you won't give me lessons to do."

"Ah!" exclaimed the fairy, "I shall be able to give you a lesson without the aid of books. In our world we never use them; we teach by experience; if properly instructed, you may learn that love and charity to your fellow-creatures, duties cheerfully undertaken, and trials patiently borne, bring happiness and content, while selfishness and vanity produce nothing but misery and despondency. This we call the lesson of solitary experience, since the pupil has to learn it entirely without help from others."

"Oh!" said Hilda, who was sorely puzzled, and did not understand a word of the fairy's speech, yet felt somehow that it meant you were not always to get your own way. Indeed, she had a shadowy idea that it meant exactly the reverse, and she began to think she was not quite sure she would like to be a fairy; still, if she did not quite get her own way, she would be very pretty, and that was a great consideration to this vain little girl.

While she was thinking thus, the fairy, who stood watching her, said, "I know your thoughts. You are not quite sure you would like to be a fairy after all; is it not so?"

"Ye-es," hesitated Hilda.

"It's no use thinking so now; I changed you long ago. Here is your wand," giving her a black stick, very much like a crutch, Hilda thought, as she took it and looked at it, "fairies always have—"

"Oh, she's gone!" said she, suddenly looking up to find the fairy had vanished. "Well, I had better

go, too; but where shall I go first?" thought Hilda. "Dear me! how my limbs ache, and how something hurts my feet." As she said this, she looked down at her feet. She found she was walking on the sharp, rough stones of the high road, instead of the soft turf of her father's orchard. She looked all round, and to her surprise saw only the same long, stony road extending for miles before and behind her; no green fields were to be seen, only a dreary waste of common, and the long road which went straight on till lost in the distant horizon. Every step she took the stones seemed to pierce her feet. "Fairies can fly," thought she, "so I need not walk." Then she found she had no wings, but what seemed to her a weight on her back. She walked many weary miles, the stones hurting her feet, and the sun shining fiercely on her; she found that as long as she held the little black stick in her hand she could not stop, but was obliged to go on. When she let go of it, she sank on the ground; but sitting on rough stones is worse than walking on them, so she grasped the little black stick and walked on till she came to a dirty village. Very tired and hungry, she felt glad to see the village, dirty though it was, for there she might at least rest, and find something to eat. She no sooner entered the village than several dirty children ran after her, screaming—

"Look at that ugly old woman! A witch! a witch!"

It was in vain she turned, and shook her stick at them; they only cried out the more, and pelted her with stones and mud. Groups of untidy, ill-looking men and women came out of the cottages, hearing the noise, but instead of helping her, and correcting the children, they joined the cry of, "A witch! a witch! Catch her, and burn her." It was only by the help of her stick, which seemed to drag her along, that she was able to escape.

At length the noise died away, the stick went slower and slower, and at length stopped. Giving a sigh of relief, Hilda again looked round, and found herself in a beautiful and extensive park. The ground was covered with fragrant flowers, and all around was calmness and peace; better still, a short distance before her, and approaching her, was a lovely child, just like her little sister, or, was it indeed, the little sister over whom she was always tyrannising? At any rate, she would speak kindly to her, and ask where she was, and, if it should be her little sister, she would give her a kiss, and, perhaps, ask her to forgive her. On came the child, singing, until Hilda could have touched her; she was just going to speak, when the child looked up, and, with a wild scream, fled with the swiftness of a startled deer down a side avenue, and was lost to sight. Astonishment at the child's behaviour made Hilda pause, but she soon recovered herself. Every step she took seemed to show her some new charm in the landscape. She was delighted at the beauty of

the place, and made up her mind she must be very near Fairyland.

At some distance before her was a pool of water, with overhanging trees; directly Hilda saw it, she determined to go and bathe her feet in it. When she reached the pool she sat down on the bank, and, bending forward to unclasp her shoe, she caught sight of her face in the water. She started up with horror and surprise. That hideous creature could not be herself, she would not believe her eyes, and yet she must have another look. Again she bent forward, and stood staring at the reflection, so fascinated she could not move.

No wonder people called her a witch, and her sister did not know her, for she now felt sure that the child she had seen was her sister. "Oh, what a fright I am!" she shrieked, as she saw her face a mass of wrinkles, small, red, watery eyes, bushy, overhanging brows, black teeth, thin lips, and generally ill-tempered expression, and, what was worse than all, a large hump on her back.

Hilda stood a long time staring into the pool—it seemed to her that she stood there years; then she turned slowly and sorrowfully away, wishing she had been more amiable and contented when she was a little girl at home.

Again she trudged on over the fields, till she came to a small town quite the reverse of the village she had passed through; it was so clean, and the people so neat and tidy. As she approached she saw a little girl sitting on a doorstep, eating some bread and butter, so she went up to her, and said, "Please give a poor old woman something to eat. I am so hungry."

The child gave her a piece of bread, and looking up into her face said, "If you will come home with me, mother will give you some more," and she looked so pretty, and held out her little plump hand. So Hilda smiled, and took it; the child chattered to her without the slightest fear or shrinking, indeed, Hilda was not nearly so ugly at the present moment as she walked quietly along with the child, for she was thinking how differently she behaved when she was at home, and how she could not bear old women, and would not give them anything, or go near them, though they were not half so hideous as she was.

The child at length stopped before a pretty cottage just outside the town, and opening the gate of a small, well-kept garden, led the old woman up to a rose-covered porch, in which sat a young woman knitting.

"This poor woman is so tired and hungry, mother, that I brought her to you," said the little girl.

"That's right, Polly. Take a seat," continued she in a gentle tone to Hilda, jumping up and going into the house, from which she issued in a few moments with a basin of bread and milk. This she gave to Hilda, telling her she should have some more

when she had finished that. "You have travelled far, I have no doubt; if you like to stay here for the night, I will make you up a bed," said the kind-hearted woman.

"No, thank you; I must go on," said Hilda, quite affected by the woman's kindness. "Thank you, my good woman, for your kindness in giving me something to eat; I am very sorry I cannot repay you."

"Oh, don't talk of payment; it is our duty to help those in distress. I am sorry you must go on to-night, but good-bye, and God speed you on your journey!" continued the woman, as she watched Hilda's departure from the gate, holding her child by the hand.

Hilda continued her journey, often jeered at and tormented, and with her pride and vanity often sorely wounded; but her better feelings prevailed, and she seldom flew into such rages as she had done at the pool. She frequently did good, not only to those who were kind to her, but even to her tormentors, the boys. At first it was only in hopes of regaining her beauty and the reward promised by the fairy to all who bore their hardships bravely, but soon Hilda took a delight in helping and comforting others, and in many of the towns and villages she visited, people called her "the good woman."

I cannot tell you all she saw and did in her wanderings and adventures, although some of them were sufficiently wonderful, but will come to the last. Hilda was one day making her way from one village to another some few miles distant; she had to pass through a small hamlet. As she was walking along, her thoughts ran thus: "How time passes to be sure! Here have I been for years wandering about more like a sister of mercy than any one else. I never thought to be doing such hard work as I have done. What a time it is since I was a little girl at home, wishing all sorts of things. Then I used to think there was nothing like doing as one liked, and yet I have been doing all sorts of unpleasant things for years. I don't think the time ever passed so quickly before, and though I have been able to help others, could never help myself."

While thinking thus something seemed to strike her on the forehead. She started, and found herself in her father's orchard. She had fallen asleep under the apple-tree; one of the apples had fallen and struck her, and so awakened her.

"Well," said Hilda, rubbing her forehead with rather a rueful countenance, "I'll never fall asleep under an apple-tree again; glad I am it was only a dream!" and so saying, little Hilda ran in and told her mamma her dream, and her mamma told her she must try and remember it when she was inclined to be discontented and naughty, and Hilda promised she would, and she did; and though she was not always good, she became more gentle as years went on.

LAURA.

STRAY NOTES.

"ALL THAT'S BRIGHT MUST FADE."

THE most lasting houses have their seasons more or less of a certain constitutional strength. They have their spring-time—their prosperous beginnings; they have their time for ripening fruit in the full sunshine of prosperity; they have their autumnal decline, and their extinction in the winter of adversity—not always to rise again in another spring-time of prosperity. In proof of this, history furnishes us with the examples of the Plantagenets, the Staffords, and the Nevills. The great-great-grandson of Margaret Plantagenet, daughter and heiress of George, Duke of Clarence, followed the craft of a cobbler, at a little town in Newport, in Shropshire, in 1637. Thus the aspiring blood of Lancaster had indeed sunk to the ground. "Man being in honour abideth not." Witness the following:—Mr. Joseph Smart, of Hales Owen, a butcher, was the lineal descendant of Edmund Woodstock, Earl of Kent, sixth son of Edward I., King of England, and entitled to royal arms. Mr. George Wilmot, keeper of the turnpike-gate at Cooper's Bank, near Dudley, and Mr. Stephen James Penny, sexton (late) at St. George's, Hanover Square, were lineal descendants of Thomas Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, fifth son of Edward III. The last male representative of the great Duke of Buckingham, Roger Stafford, born at Malpas, in Cheshire, in 1572, was refused the inheritance of his family honours on account of his poverty. This unfortunate youth went by the name

of Studd, indignant that his patronymic of Stafford should be associated with his humble lot. Of the Nevills, the direct heir in the senior line, Charles, the sixth Earl of Westmoreland, lived to an advanced age in the Low Countries, "meanly and miserably;" and George Nevill, who was created Duke of Bedford by King Edward IV., that he might be of suitable rank to espouse the Lady Elizabeth Plantagenet, was eventually degraded from all titles and rank on the ground of indigence. At present, six peers of England have descent from the Lord Protector—Earls of Morley, Chichester, Rothes, Cowper, Clarendon, De Grey and Ripon.

MARRIAGE RING.

WHY is it that the person to be married is enjoined to put a ring upon the fourth finger of his spouse's left hand? It is answered—there is nothing more in this than that the custom was handed down to the present age from the practice of our ancestors, who found the left hand more convenient for such ornaments than the right; in that it is ever less used than the other. As to the fourth finger of the left hand, there is this reason—it is more capable of preserving a ring from bruises, having this one quality peculiar to itself—that it cannot be extended but in company with some other finger, whereas the rest may be singly stretched to their full length and straightness.

THE NEW DOLL.

A POEM FOR A CHILD.

BLUE shoes, long ringlets, the pinkest of frocks,
That's my sweet dolly, my own golden locks;

Look at her silkiest flaxen dear curls,
Just like the real ones on real little girls;
What a pink forehead, and what pretty cheeks,
What a red mouth, too, just like one that speaks!
Largest of dear blue eyes, open so wide,
Looking right forward and never aside;
Nose like our own mamma's, pretty and straight—
Noses are sometimes so ugly and great;
Lips, mamma's, too, are exactly like these,
Two that seem saying, "Oh, do kiss us, please!"
Turn her round sideways—yes, that's how I mean;
See, her dear ears through her hair can be seen;
And what a neck—look, all smooth, round and white;

Baby's is like it, when just washed at night.
Mind how you hold her, please! Oh, care do take,
Aunt says it is wax, and you know wax dolls break.

W. C. BENNETT.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

296. What king was it whose name described the state of his country during his lifetime?

297. Two things are said to have happened by chance, one an act of destruction, and the other resulting in neglect; where are they mentioned?

298. What texts prove that our Lord on earth had "body," "soul," and "spirit?"

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 656.

285. David's: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, called sons of Zeruiah, David's sister (2 Sam. ii. 18).

286. She became the progenitor of Him, the promised One, through her son Judah, from whom the Jews took their name (Gen. xxix. 35—xlix. 10).

287. A Hebrew could not prepare bread for an Egyptian.

288. The death and place of burial of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, are both mentioned (Gen. xxxv. 8).

289. That in a wood in the wilderness Ziph, where he administered comfort and encouragement to his friends, and "strengthened his hand in God" (1 Sam. xxiii. 15, 16).